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A Soviet Journal Prints an Anti-Khrushchev Novel

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MOSCOW, March 17—A Soviet literary journal that consistently criticized Nikita S. Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign has published a novel that describes Mr. Khrushchev's ouster as Premier in 1964 as a sign of "real democracy."

The latest issue of *Oktyabr*, regarded here as the Soviet Union's leading conservative literary publication, contains "The Eternal Flame," by Vladimir Krasilshchikov, in which the fall of Mr. Khrushchev is pictured as a victory for those interested in sound economic policies and not in flashy but inefficient projects.

In a sense, this "anti-Khrushchev" novel—the first that actually mentions his ouster—is a parody of anti-Stalin works that appeared during Mr. Khrushchev's tenure as Soviet leader.

Order From the Top

In those books, everything went right after the dictator died in 1953 or after his crimes were revealed by Mr. Khrushchev in 1956. A recurrent theme in those books was that Stalin had no sense of how to run the country efficiently and that the economy began to improve only after his death.

In this novel, the hero is a

plant manager, Lev Silin, who is ordered from the top—the impression is given that the directive comes from Mr. Khrushchev personally—to put a new foundry into operation two weeks ahead of schedule, even though this would lead to a waste of 5 million rubles.

When Silin objects to the directive, he is told not to put economic considerations ahead of political ones and that the early completion of the foundry will be widely publicized as a victory for the Soviet system in the competition with the United States.

Silin goes to Moscow in October, 1964, to make a final protest and to try to get the directive rescinded. While there, he hears a radio announcement in the hotel lobby: "...from his responsibilities as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party, as a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party, and as chairman of the

Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union."

Mr. Khrushchev's name is not actually mentioned, but the event referred to in the announcement is well known to all readers as that of his ouster.

"Well," thought Silin, still not recovered from the incredible news. "Undoubtedly this is a sign of our strength. This is real democracy—democracy in action; if someone has not provided leadership, remove him, no matter who he is," Mr. Krasilshchikov writes.

A friend of Silin, a member of the Central Committee comes up to him and says good morning. Silin replies "Good work!"

Mr. Khrushchev was removed by the party's Central Committee meeting in special session.

With Mr. Khrushchev gone, the plant is allowed to construct the foundry on schedule and the state is saved from financial disaster.

Oktyabr, edited by Vsevolod A. Kochetov, has been a regular critic of Mr. Khrushchev, mainly for his attempts to

blacken Stalin's reputation. While Mr. Khrushchev was in power, the journal carried on its criticism by attacking liberal works, and since Mr. Khrushchev's ouster, the journal has tried openly to rehabilitate Stalin's reputation in whatever way it can.